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Examining Emotional Intelligence and Leadership Skills of Trainers

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Abstract

This study was carried out to examine emotional intelligence and leadership skills of trainers against certain factors. The study sample was composed of 99 people including 51 men and 48 women who were employed at Spor A.Ş. facilities in Istanbul and agreed to participate in the research. The research used the survey method. The sample group was administered the personal information form, Bar On Emotional intelligence scale and the leadership style survey developed by Davit R. Frew. The findings from the study were evaluated in the spss program and a frequency analysis, Anova, the Turkey Hsd test to identify which group caused the difference determined, and the Pearson Correlation analyses to identify the relation between emotional intelligence and leadership. As a result of the study, it was observed the trainers are autocratic in the leadership dimension; trainers in the e division were better in the social responsibility, interpersonal elations, and determination sub-dimensions of emotional intelligence; trainers have high level of emotional intelligence; and there is a positive correlation at $p < 0.05$ in impulse, realism and empathy dimensions between emotional intelligence and leadership. Furthermore, empathy as the sub dimension of emotional intelligence showed a significant difference ($p < 0.27$) based on gender.

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1. Introduction

Emotional intelligence (EQ) is the space of intelligence allowing us to recognize and evaluate the emotions of ourselves and others as well as enabling us to actively reflect our knowledge on emotions and the energy of emotions to our daily life and our job to react in a proper way (Cooper & Sawaf, 2003).

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It is of course possible to exploit the benefits of emotional intelligence in different professional areas. However, the emotional intelligence is more important in certain professional fields. According to one of his studies, David Caruso made a list with respect to which professions are highlighted by higher importance of emotional intelligence. Based on this list, the members of the professions highlighted by higher importance of emotional intelligence include teachers and trainers involved in the field of education (Caruso, 2003).

Various definitions were made in many studies on leaders and leadership as seen in the following. For Certo, leadership is defined as guiding the behaviors of others towards achieving certain targets, while Hellriegel and Slocum define leadership as influencing, motivating and guiding other members in an organization to achieve targeted objectives. For George and Junes, a leader is the person who influences the members in a group or organization to ensure such groups or organizations achieved their objectives. And Krausz defines leadership as the power used in influencing the activities of others.

The key points in sports leadership are not different from the ones considered for general role of leadership. A sports leader is expected to make members of a group feel the pleasure of being a member, help them satisfy with being a part of that group and direct members towards certain activities by guiding and influencing them (Gökdeniz, 2003). Effective and productive sports management and achievement of desired results in sports organizations is possible with sports managers who are greatly familiar with the tendency and have the leadership qualities with a background in sports education. Effective coaching as a leader is a dynamic process that requires self awareness of own characteristics, adopting an aligned leadership style, recognizing the features of the current situation and personalities of athletes, as well as influencing and guiding others through mutual communication and interaction.

If the trainer fails to express his knowledge together with his leadership and communications skills in an effective way, he is likely to be unsuccessful as he will face difficulties in teaching what he knows and therefore lose the thrust of athletes in him (Yılmaz, 2008). This study aims to determine the social intelligence and emotional intelligence of trainers to be compared with their leadership attributes.

2. Methods

2.1 Sample

The population is composed of trainers who are actively employed at Spor A.Ş. facilities in Istanbul. The study conducted includes 51 men and 48 women.

2.2 Measurements

This research applies the survey method to establish the relation between the leadership qualities, emotional intelligence and leadership skills of trainers. The survey has 3 parts. The first part asks 9 questions to identify the demographical data of respondents. Data about the respondents of these questions was acquired including their professional fields, education levels, ages and period of assignment at their organizations. In the second part, the leadership style survey form designed by Davit R. Frew in 1977 was decided to be used after the literature search. The survey form of Davit R. Frew is composed of 20 items. The items are prepared based on the 5-point Likert scale.

Finally, the third part uses an emotional intelligence survey of 88 items. The 5-point Likert scale was used here. The Bar-on EQ survey with validity and reliability studies made by Dr. Reuven was used as summarized and transformed to be used previously by Acar (2001) in her doctorate study.

2.3 Statistical Analysis

When evaluating the findings from the study, the SPSS 15.0 program was used for statistical analyses. When reviewing the study data, complementary statistical methods (Number, Percentage, Mean, Standard Deviation) were used. ANOVA and CORRELATION analyses were conducted to identify the reliability analysis, frequency distribution, basic or interaction-based impacts of demographical factors and to identify relations between factors, respectively. The correlation study compared the sub dimensions of emotional intelligence and leadership

characteristics.

3. Findings

Table 1: Coaching periods of participants

Work Period of Trainers	Number of Persons (N)	Distribution by Percentage (%)
1-5 years	79	79,8
5-10 years	14	14,1
10-15 years	4	4,0
20 year or above	2	2,0
Total	99	100,0

79.8% of trainers are seen to have a coaching experience of 1 to 5 years, while 14.1% had 5 to 10 years, 2% had 20 years and above.

Table 2. Frequency of participants' graduation departments

University/Department of Participants	Number of Persons (N)	Distribution by Percentage (%)
	27	27,3
School of Physical Education and Sports - BESYO (Sports management)		
BESYO (Coaching)	39	39,4
BESYO (Teaching)	3	3,0
Other than BESYO (Different Department)	30	30,3
Total	99	100,0

For the question whether the trainers were graduates of school of physical education and sports, 27.3% answered with sports management, while 39.4% gave the answer of coaching and 3% teaching with the 30.3% graduated from other departments of universities.

Table 3. Means of sub dimensions for leadership and emotional intelligence

Basic dimension	Sub dimension	N	mean	Standard deviation
Leadership	Leadership	99	2,227273	,6255313
General Mood	Optimism	99	2,193939	,6800087

	Happiness	99	2,611833	,5822733
Stress Handling Dimension	Impulse control	99	2,944781	,8114565
	Stress resistance	99	2,388889	,5684446
Adaptability dimension	Flexibility	99	2,486869	,6774271
	Realism	99	2,723232	,5804341
	Problem solving	99	1,989899	,7029813
Interpersonal dimension	Social responsibility	99	2,158249	,5293933
	Interpersonal relations	99	2,222222	,5334392
	Empathy	99	2,080808	,5903435
Personal dimension	Independence	99	2,595960	,8324931
	Self-fulfillment	99	2,757576	,5544464
	Self-respect	99	2,188889	,4541819
	Determination	99	2,195286	,6135472
	Emotional sense of self	99	2,299663	,5450144

In table 3, 99 people demonstrated leadership dimension at 2.22; optimism as a sub dimension of emotional intelligence at 2.19; happiness at 2.61; impulse control at 2.94; stress resistance at 2.38; flexibility at 2.48; realism at 2.72; problem solving at 1.98; social responsibility at 2.15; interpersonal relations at 2.22; empathy at 2.08; independence at 2.59; self-fulfillment at 2.75; self-respect at 2.18; determination at 2.19; and emotional sense of self at 2.29.

Table 4. Examining Sub Dimensions of Leadership and Emotional Intelligence Against The Question Whether Trainers Graduated From School of Physical Education and Sports

Basic dimension	Sub dimension	Besyo graduate	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	T	p
Leadership	Leadership	yes	69	2,130	,6902552	-2,166	,033*
		no	30	2,423	,4287265		
General mood	Optimism	yes	69	2,064	,5734206	-2,268	,026*
		no	30	2,381	,7700300		
Stress handling dimension	Stress resistance	Yes	69	2,306	,5777819	-2,154	,034*
		No	30	2,569	,5318977		

Adaptability	Flexibility	Yes	69	2,345	,7380185	-3,143	,002*
Dimension		No	30	2,794	,4210586		
Interpersonal dimension	Empathy	Yes	69	1,948	,5638446	-3,286	,001*
		No	30	2,355	,5766794		

In table 4, when leadership and emotional intelligence sub dimensions are examined, a difference at $p < 0.05$ was identified in leadership, optimism, stress resistance, flexibility and empathy, while no difference a found in other elements.

4. Results

This study which conducted to examine emotional intelligence and leadership qualities of trainers was participated by a total of 99 trainers including 51 men and 48 women. Majority of trainers were identified to have an experience of 1 to 5 years and many of the trainers working in this field were found to be graduates of BESYO (School of Physical Education and Sports).

The leadership mean is seen as 2.22 according to the average of leadership dimensions and sub dimensions for emotional intelligence. Accordingly, the participants are observed to be autocratic with 2.22 based on their rating in the leadership dimension. Looking at the average of sub dimensions for emotional intelligence, the trainers stated that they include themselves in the dimensions of optimism, happiness, stress resistance, flexibility, problem solving, social responsibility, interpersonal relations, empathy, independence, self-respect, determination and emotional sense of self. On the other hand, they were seen to have no idea about the impulse control in the basic dimension of stress handling; realism in the basic dimension of adaptability and self-fulfillment in the basic dimension of personal skill.

When the sub dimensions of emotional intelligence and leadership qualities are considered based on gender, a significant difference at $p < 0.05$ empathy dimension was identified in favour of men among the sub dimensions of emotional intelligence. When the sub dimensions of leadership and emotional intelligence are examined against the question of "did you graduate from a school of physical education and sports?", a significant difference at $p < 0.05$ was found in the optimism, stress resistance, flexibility and empathy dimensions in the 4 basic dimensions of leadership and emotion intelligence. Accordingly, graduates of schools of physical education and sports were found more successful in leadership qualities, optimism, stress resistance, flexibility and empathy dimensions, compared to those who did not graduate from schools of physical education and sports.

According to Goleman (1999) and Shapiro (2002) individuals demonstrating emphatic behaviours are more efficient in establishing rapport in their relations with others and they are more successful in their education and professional life. Therefore, individuals with empathic skills may tend to seek social support in handling a situation they perceive as a stress. In problem-oriented handling, individuals focus on the problem and share their feelings about the problems with others (Özay and Şahin 1997). When these attributes are considered, it may be suggested that individuals with skills that are satisfactory in terms of interpersonal skills may tend to choose problem-oriented handling and seek social support when handling stress.

Based on the age of trainers, a difference at $p < 0.05$ was found in flexibility, interpersonal relations, self respect, emotional sense of self among leadership attributes and sub dimensions of emotional intelligence. It was observed that the age of 30-35 have higher levels of leadership skills compared to the age group of 22-25.

In a study conducted by Dorak and Vurgun (2006), a significant relation was found between the empathy levels and team synergy of athletes engaged in team sports and it was argued that the team synergy improves as the empathy levels of athletes increase. Furthermore, when team synergies were examined for athletes in team sports with various experiences, the synergy levels of fresh athletes were found higher than the one of experienced athletes. Therefore, it was argued that as the experience level increases, the athletes start to think about themselves more, resulting in a negative result in terms of team success. Our study identified that trainers who are younger and have

less experience demonstrated a more powerful approach of team synergy, "individual attractiveness-role" and "group integrity-role". This study supports our research on such terms.

As a result, the study conducted demonstrated that trainers are autocratic in leadership dimension; they have a high level of emotional intelligence; and there is a significant relation between emotional intelligence and leadership. In addition, sub parameters were found to be affected greatly in School of Physical Education and Sports graduates compared to graduates of other fields, supporting the idea that emotional intelligence may be developed through education.

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